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HINTS ON HORSEMANSHIP,

EDWARD MOXON & CO. DOVER STREET.

1866

HINTS ON HORSEMANSHIP,

TO

A Nephew and Niece;

OR,

COMMON SENSE AND COMMON ERRORS IN COMMON RIDING.

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BY

COLONEL GEORGE GREENWOOD,
LATE LIEUT.-COL. COMMANDING 2ND LIFE GUARDS.

NEW EDITION.

LONDON:
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HINTS ON HORSEMANSHIP.

CHAPTER I.

MILITARY RIDING NOT FIT FOR COMMON RIDING.

Throughout Europe there is only one style of riding *taught;* that is, the soldier's *one-handed* style.—*Two hands* should be used to the reins.—A soldier's horse must turn on the wrong rein.—Common riders generally turn their horses on the wrong rein. Result of this with colts or restive horses.—Indications are not *aids.*

When you wish to turn to the right pull the right rein stronger than the left. This is common sense. The common error is precisely the reverse. The common error is, when you wish to turn to the right to pass the hand to the right. By this the right rein is slackened, and the left rein is tightened, across the horse's neck, and the horse is required to turn to the right when the left rein is pulled. It is to correct this common error,

this monstrous and perpetual source of bad riding and of bad usage to good animals, that these pages are written.

England is the only European country which admits of more than one style of riding. But in all Europe, even in England, there is but one style of riding *taught*, as a system; that style is the manége or military style. The military style is, and must ever be essentially *a one-handed style*, for the soldier must have his right hand at liberty for his weapons. The recruit is indeed made to ride with a single snaffle in two hands, but only as a preparatory step to the one-handed style. His left hand then becomes *his bridle hand*, and that hand must hold the reins in such a manner as will require the least possible aid from *the sword hand* to shorten them as occasion may require. This is with the fourth finger only between them (Fig. 1).

Only one style of riding *taught*.

That is, a *one-handed* style.

For these reasons, as far as soldiers are concerned, I do not see how the present system can be altered for the better, unless it be by placing the three last fingers of the left hand between the reins (Fig. 2), instead of the fourth

finger only. The reins held in this way are as easily and as quickly shortened, by drawing them with the right

FIG. 1.—STRICT REGIMENTAL.

hand through the left, as if they were separated by the fourth finger only. I always adopted this mode myself

when my sword was in my hand; and I should think it worth trial for all soldiers. My two last chargers had

FIG. 2.—VARIED REGIMENTAL.

been notoriously restive horses, and I could not have ridden them in the strictly regimental mode.

Two hands should be used to the reins.

But I see no reason why, because soldiers are compelled to guide their horses with the left hand only, and with the fourth finger only between the reins, that ladies and civilians should be condemned to the same system. On the contrary, I would have ladies as well as gentlemen use both hands to the reins, whether of the curb or of the snaffle, somewhat as the rough-rider or colt-breaker uses the reins of a single snaffle; but the reins should enter the hands outside instead of inside the fourth fingers, and they should quit the hands between the first and second fingers instead of between the first finger and thumb, as will be explained in the next chapter.

Fasten the end of a rein to the upper part of the back of a chair; pull the reins enough to raise two of the legs off the ground, and to keep the chair balanced on the other two. Take your reins as ladies and soldiers are taught to take them (Fig. 1), both grasped in the left hand, the fourth finger only between them, and (I quote from the regulations of the English cavalry) "the top of the thumb firmly closed on them—the upper part of the

arm hanging straight down from the shoulder—the left elbow lightly touching the hip—the lower part of the arm square to the upper—little finger on a level with the elbow—wrist rounded outwards—the back of the hand to the front—the thumb pointing across the body, and three inches from it." In this position we are taught that "the little finger of the bridle-hand has four lines of action—first, towards the breast (to stop or rein back); second, towards the right shoulder (to turn to the right); third, towards the left shoulder (to turn to the left); fourth, towards the horse's head (to advance)." Try the second motion: you will find it a very nice operation, and that you are capable of shortening the right rein only in a very slight degree; you will also find that, if the hand ceases to be precisely opposite the centre of the body, the moment it is passed to the right the right rein becomes slackened, and the left rein is pulled. This is still more the case when the horse's neck is between the reins; the left rein is then instantly shortened across the neck.

I will not assert that the art of riding thus is impossible, though it has ever been so to me; and though, in my own experience, I never saw a cavalry soldier, rough-rider, riding-master, or any horseman whatever, who turned his horse, single-handed, on the proper rein. But I may assert that it is an exceedingly nice and delicate art. It is the opera-dancing of riding. And it would be as absurd to put the skill of its professors in requisition in common riding or across country, as to require Taglioni to *chasser* over a ploughed field. For single-handed indications, supposing them to be correctly given—which, as I have said, I have never known; but supposing them to be correctly given—they are not sufficiently distinct to turn a horse, except in a case of optimism. That is, supposing for a short time a perfectly broken horse, in perfect temper, perfectly on his haunches, going perfectly up to his bit, and on perfect ground. Without all these perfections—suppose even the circumstance of the horse being excited or alarmed, or becoming violent from any other cause; that he is sluggish or sullen;

A soldier's horse must turn on the wrong rein.

that he stiffens his neck or pokes his nose—single-handed indications are worth nothing. But as for riding a horse perfectly on his haunches through a long day's journey, or in rough or deep ground, or across country, one might as well require infantry to make long forced marches at ordinary time, and to strictly preserve their touch and dressing; or, still to compare it to opera-dancing, Coulon to go through a day's shooting with the pas de zephir.

But correct single-handed indications, with the fourth finger only between the reins, will not be obeyed by one horse in ten thousand. Try them in driving. There the terret-pad prevents their being given incorrectly, and a bearing-rein, a severe bit, and a whip, give you every advantage in keeping your horse collected; yet you will find them wholly inefficient. The soldier, who is compelled to turn to the right by word of command, when the correct indication is unanswered, in despair throws his hand to the right. The consequence is, that no horse is a good soldier's horse, till he has been trained to turn on the wrong rein.

Without the same excuse for it, the same may be said of all ladies and civilians who ride with one hand only, and of almost all who ride with two hands. For, strange to say, in turning, both hands are generally passed to the right or left, and I have known many of what may be called the most perfect straight-*forward* hands; that is, men who on the turf would hold the most difficult three-year-old to the steady stroke of the two-mile course, and place him as a winner to half-a-length—who in the hunting-field would ride the hottest, or the most phlegmatic made hunter, with equal skill, through all difficulties of ground, and over every species of fence, with admirable precision and equality of hand—or who on the exercise ground would place his broken charger on his haunches, and make him walk four miles an hour, canter six and a half, trot eight and a half, and gallop eleven, without being out in either pace a second of time, but who marred all by the besetting sin of side-feeling—of turning the horse on the wrong rein. The consequence is, that they can ride nothing but what has been trained to answer the wrong indications.

Common riders turn on the wrong rein.

This is something like steaming without steering. Set them on a finely broken horse, on a colt, or a restive horse, and they become helpless children—the powerless prisoners of the brutes they bestride. How often does one see one's acquaintance in this distressing situation, with courage enough to dare what man dare, but without the power to do what the rough-rider has just done! First comes the false indication of the rider, then the confusion and hesitation of the horse; next the violence of the rider; then the despair and rebellion of the horse. The finish is a fractured limb from a rear or a runaway. The poor brute is set down as restive and in fact becomes more or less a misanthrope for the rest of his days. I have seen the gentle and brave, under such circumstances, act very much like the cruel and cowardly; that is to say, first rough an innocent animal for their own fault, and then yield to his resistance. It is in consequence of this that we find so many restive horses; that so few thorough-bred horses—that is, horses of the highest courage—can be made hunters; that, in fact,

Result of this with colts or restive horses.

almost all high-couraged young horses become restive after leaving the colt-breaker's hands. It is, indeed, in consequence of this that the class of people called colt-breakers exists at all. For if we all rode on their principle, which is the true principle, any groom or moderately good rider could break any colt or ride any restive horse.

No horse becomes restive in the colt-breaker's hands; nor do any remain so when placed in his hands. The reason is that he invariably rides with one bridle and two hands, instead of two bridles and one hand. When he wishes to go to the right he pulls the right rein stronger than the left. When he wishes to go to the left he pulls the left rein stronger than the right. These are indications which, if the colt will not obey, he will at least understand, the very first time that he is mounted, and which the most obstinate will not long resist. But as may be supposed, it takes a long time to make him understand that he is to turn to the right when the left rein is pulled, and to the left when the right rein is pulled. And it is only the meek-spirited and docile who will do

this at all. Such, however, is the general docility of the half-bred horse, that a great proportion of them are, after long ill-usage, taught to answer these false indications, in the same way that a carthorse is brought to turn right or left by the touch of the whip on the opposite side of the neck, or the word of the driver; and indeed such is the nicety to which it may be brought, that you constantly hear people boast that their horses will "turn by the weight of the reins on the neck." This, however, only proves the docility of the horse, and how badly he has been ridden. For a horse which has been finely broken should take notice only of the indications of his rider's hands on his mouth, not of any side-feeling of the reins against his neck.

Indications are not *aids.*

By *indications* generally, I mean the motions and applications of the hands, legs, and whip, to direct and determine the paces, turnings, movements, and carriage of the horse. I have used the word throughout instead of *aids*, as being more explanatory and certainly less liable to abuse. For common sense tells us that a horse

receives no aid from a pull in the mouth with a piece of iron, or a blow with a whip, or a kick in the side with an armed heel, however these may indicate to him the wishes or commands of his rider. I have also used the term *bearing* on the horse's mouth instead of *appui*, since to those who do not understand French appui will convey no meaning at all,—and to those who do understand French it will convey the false ideas of the necessity and power of the rider to *support* his horse. I promise my pupil every *aid* and *support from* his horse. But I beg him not to think of offering either aid or support *to* his horse. I beg him to believe that the horse carries the rider, and not the rider the horse. But this we will discuss in another chapter. That the horse supports the rider is common sense: that the rider supports the horse is the common error.

CHAPTER II.

HOLDING AND HANDLING THE REINS.

Reins at full length.—The downward clutch.—Grecian mode of holding and handling the reins.—The side-clutch.—The two reins crossed in the hand.—A rein in each hand.—Turn to the right, and left.—The hunting hand.—The rough-rider's hand.—Fixing the hands.—Use of both bridles at once.—Shortening the reins when held, one in each hand, mode of taught and of untaught horsemen.—Use of the whip.—Horses swerve, turn, and refuse *only to the left*.—Fault in "the great untaught," English, two-handed rider.

Reins at full length.

To practise the indications of the hands, take the bridle which is attached to the chair at full length (Fig. 3), with the tips of the four fingers of the left hand between the reins at the centre, the first and fourth fingers detached to facilitate their working on the rein proper to each; the hand pendant, with the back to the front, and balance the chair on two legs.

If the length of the rein suits, it may be so held in long rides when the horse is going quietly at an extended

walk, for directly as the slowness of the pace is the length of the horse, and so should be the length of the rein.

FIG. 3.—REINS AT FULL LENGTH.

The horse is at his greatest length when standing still, and if you force him to collect himself then, he will be

uneasy and fidget.* But the reins must never be loose. The bearing on the mouth, however lightly, must still be felt; and if the horse, in attempting to stare about, as colts and ill-ridden horses will, should throw his head to the right, it must be stopped by the feeling of the tip of the fourth finger on the left rein; if he throws his head to the left, by the feeling of the first finger on the right rein. But provided that the bearing on the horse's mouth, and this power of keeping his head straight, are preserved, a horse cannot have too much liberty under the circumstances supposed. To turn to the right both reins must be pulled, the right the strongest, by feeling the tip of the first finger towards you; both legs must be pressed, the left the strongest; the whip shown on the left. To turn to the left the reverse indications.

Down clutch.

To take up the reins use the downward clutch† (Fig. 4); that is, place the two first fingers of the right hand

* This is one reason against an *unalterable* bearing-rein.

† Have mercy on this *little* word, *great* reader, and do compound a sesquipedalian clutch for me, out of digitus and δάχτυλος.

between the reins at the greatest convenient distance, and slide them smoothly back. Repeat this movement,

FIG. 4.—DOWN CLUTCH.

changing from hand to hand, and keeping the chair balanced and steady. This clutch is excellent for a straight-forward, *hot* horse; it shortens the reins any

length at one movement, with a very low, steady bearing. Two hands may be used (Fig. 5). I conceive this to be

FIG. 5.—DOWN CLUTCH, REIN IN EACH HAND.

Grecian mode.

the Grecian mode of holding and handling the reins (see frontispiece and vignette, from the Elgin Marbles), except

that the Greeks had one finger between the reins instead of two; and they held the reins, whether together or

FIG. 6.—SIDE CLUTCH.

divided, between the thumb and the second finger. The first finger was thus detached, and used only for guiding,

by which very distinct indications may be given on either rein when both are in one hand.

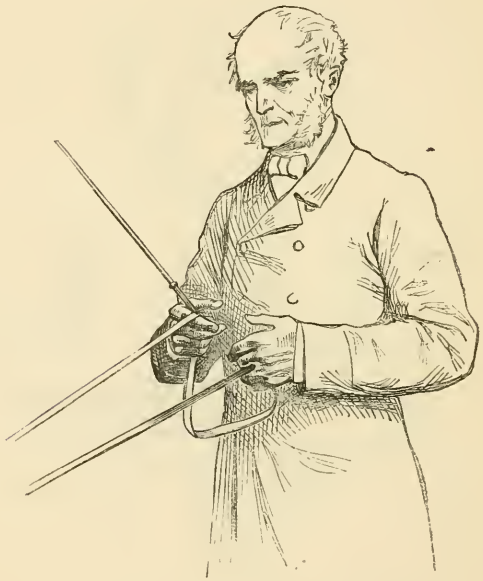

FIG. 7.—SIDE CLUTCH, REIN IN EACH HAND.

Side clutch. At a walk, with a quiet horse, this *down* clutch may be turned into the *side*-clutch (Fig. 6 and Fig. 7); it is nearly

the same as the English mode of driving, but the right rein is uppermost, which facilitates the dividing the reins and placing them together again, and when the reins are in the left hand, the right rein quits the hand between the second and third finger. This allows you to hold one rein while you slip the other, besides that the left rein is not disturbed in taking the right rein in the right hand, and in returning it to the left hand.

But the following position (Fig. 8) is the foundation of all fine handling, and therefore of all fine riding. Cross.

And if the pupil will only thoroughly acquire this one movement he shall have my leave to consign the rest of my book "protervis in mare Creticum portare ventis."

We will call this movement cross, because the reins, when in one hand, are crossed inside the hand. Take the left rein with the three last fingers of the left hand, so that it enters the hand outside the little finger, and quits the hand between the first and second finger. Place the right rein in the left hand over the first and second finger, so that it enters the hand outside the first

finger and quits the hand between the second and third finger, so that the whole hand is between the reins

FIG. 8.—CROSS.

where they enter the hand, and the second finger is between them where they quit the hand. Fig. 9 shows the rein in each hand.

Rein in each hand

At every change from hand to hand the reins may be shortened to any extent. To lengthen them they must be

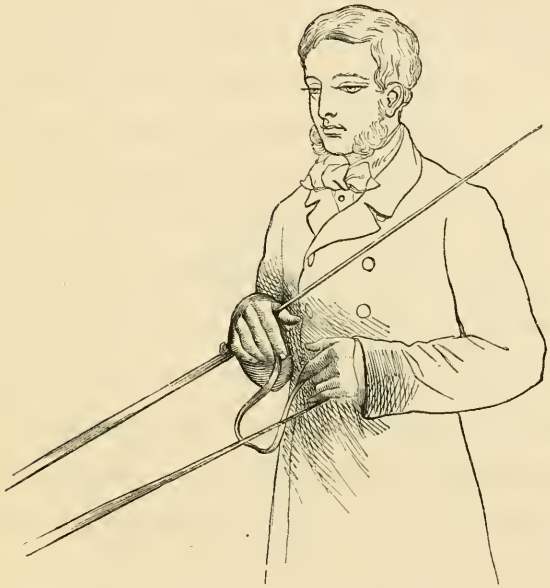

FIG. 9.—REIN IN EACH HAND.

slipped while a rein is in each hand, turning the two fore fingers towards you. You cannot pay too much attention to practising the cross from hand to hand on

the balanced chair. There should be nothing approaching to a jerk or shake of either rein. Neither rein should be for an instant loosened, but an equal tension kept on both, and both should be of precisely equal length when crossed in one hand. Be assured, however childish it may appear to you, this practice will teach you the true principle of handling your horse, and will give to the bearings and indications of your hands on his mouth a delicate elasticity and resilience resulting from the play of every articulation from the tips of the fingers to the shoulders. At the same time if power is required, instead of having the left hand only, with the fourth finger only between the reins, by taking them in the full grasp of the hands it allows you to employ the whole strength of both shoulders.

The cross together with the rein in each hand should be so constantly going on as to give the appearance of playing with the reins whenever anything like riding and handling is required. In fact, he who can use his reins in this manner with a riotous horse, without disturbing the

bearing is a rider, he who cannot is not. Fig. 10 shows the turn to the right when the reins are crossed in the

Turn to the right and left.

FIG. 10.—TURN TO THE RIGHT.

left hand, with the use of the whip. Fig. 11 the turn to the left. Fig. 12 for holding the horse to a hunting or

Hunting

and rough-rider's hand.

racing gallop on a snaffle is the same as Fig. 9, but with the fists closed. Fig. 13 is the same in a different

FIG. 11.—TURN TO THE LEFT.

position. It is the rough-rider's hand for working a horse up and making him collect himself with a snaffle. And this is the only case where a little *working* of the bit on

his mouth (the scier le bridon of the French) is to be allowed. Fig. 14 is the same, with the thumbs fixed on

Fixing the hands.

FIG. 12.—HUNTING GALLOP.

the back of a chair. If a thumb is fixed in this way behind the lower part of each pummel, the lady acquires a

hold which no horse can force; at the same time it gives the lowest possible and the steadiest possible bearing.

FIG. 13.—ROUGH-RIDER.

The hand should be as open as is possible and as much closed as is necessary. Modifications of this position,

with the hands closed, are used in holding the horse to his gallop in hunting and racing.

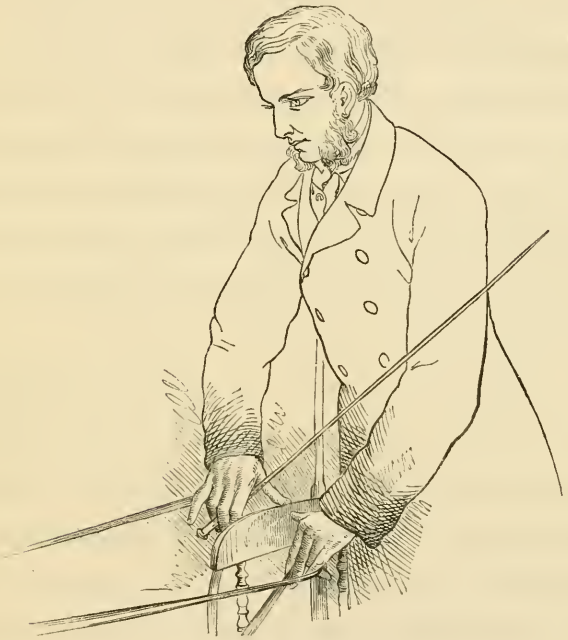

FIG. 14.—FIXING HANDS.

Use of both bridles at once.

To use the two bridles at once, that is, the four reins, place the little fingers between the reins, the snaffle

inside, the curb outside. Let them quit the hands over the first finger, the thumb on them. In the left hand, the snaffle to the left of the thumb, the curb to the right. In the right hand the snaffle to the right, the curb to the left. This keeps them distinct, and allows the power of slipping or dropping either, by pressing the thumb only on the other. The two bridles should be always in two hands, except when placed together to shorten them. In a *storm*, that is, till you have time for nicety, treat the two bridles as if they were one.

Two handed shortening the rein, taught and untaught.

The mode of shortening the reins in two-handed riding, which I have seen rough-riders use, and which I have seen recruits taught when using the single snaffle in all riding-houses, civil or military, foreign or English, and which is detailed in the école du cavalier in the French cavalry ordonnance, is wholly vicious. There are no directions at all given for this in the treatise on military equitation in the regulations for the English cavalry, nor have I ever met with any in any book, foreign or English, except in the French ordonnance.

To shorten the right rein on the French system, bring the thumbs together, take the right rein with the thumb and first finger of the left hand, the thumbs touching, raise the left hand, and let the right rein slip till the thumbs are one inch apart. With the right rein thus, one inch shorter than the left, when it is required to shorten the left equally, by management you may bring the two thumbs together again without loosening the left rein. I say, by management, you may do so, but the chances are that the longest rein is invariably thus slackened previously to being shortened, and consequently, that the bearing on the horse's mouth is disturbed. But supposing it possible to manage this by an inch at a time, it is quite impossible to manage it at a greater distance. If, therefore, you have to shorten both reins a foot, you cannot effect it without twenty-four operations. This is not at all an unlikely occurrence in riding unruly horses, for such horses are commanded by being made to bend or collect themselves. Their most frequent defence is jerking their heads away and

extending themselves; and the facility of adjusting the length of the reins to the degree in which they extend or collect themselves, makes the difference of whether you can ride such horses or not. If, in riding a half-broken, hot, or violent horse, he jerks his head down so as to draw one rein six inches longer than the other, it is impossible to bring the thumbs together without slackening the longest rein—at the moment you wish it tightened—four or five inches. I need not dilate on the effect of this in riding such a horse as I have supposed.

This French military system, then, of shortening the reins in two-handed riding is actually ridiculous. But a ridiculous system is better than no system at all. And except this French system, I know of *none taught* save those which I have attempted to teach in this chapter.

What mistakes are made in this way, even by the *finest untaught* horseman, are shown in the last paragraph of this chapter.

In all the practices enjoined above, the hand which

quits the rein should slide along it *behind* the hand which receives the rein. And in all these positions the hand should always be at right angles with the reins; you then have the play of all the joints. If the hand is in the same line with the reins, the play is only from the elbow.

The thumb should not be used where delicacy is required, since it acts in a contrary direction to the fingers, and entirely stops the play of all the joints of the hand and fingers. Close your thumb on your fingers and you will see.

Where power is required, the change from the utmost resiliance to the utmost rigidity is effected in the time necessary to close the fists. Every gradation, however, between the closed fists and the tips of the open fingers is at the option of the rider.

Use of the whip.

Gentlemen having a leg and spur on each side of the horse to urge and to guide him, should ride without any whip at all if the horse has been subjected to the leg, so as to have the right hand as free for the reins as the left: there should be no such thing as "*a bridle hand.*"

If a whip is carried, it should be as light as possible. It should be held up like a hunter or a rough-rider, not down like a jockey; and so completely between the *hand* and the thumb as to leave the *fingers* free for the reins. To carry that *club* called the handle of a hunting whip is a frightful enormity. The excuse is, to open gates; but if you put your horse's side against a gate, it is better opened by the hand, but keep your leg from your horse's side. The *fingering* of the reins should not be impeded even by thick gloves; as thick muffettees as you like, but no gloves thicker than kid.

The action of the whip, by the turn of the wrist, on either side of the horse, is of every importance in lady's riding, in colt-breaking, in riding the restive horse, and I had well nigh said, in hunting and race riding. For how often do we see the race lost by a swerve *to the left* (attributed to distress). The hunter invariably refuses by turning *to the left*. The restive horse invariably turns *to the left*. Have all horses joined in Holy Alliance to fight on one plan? If not, why do they all turn *to the*

Horses swerve and turn only *to the left.*

left? Because the whip is only used *on the right.* There is, however, another cause which acts in conjunction with this. Even our finest two-handed English riders (who, in my opinion, are the finest riders in the world), when they use the right hand on the right rein, continue to hold both reins with the left hand, and they slip the right rein a little through the left hand in order to place both hands even. This is a most vicious habit. When they quit the right rein to use the whip, or to throw the arm back at a fence (another most vicious habit), by their system of holding and handling the reins they have not the power to place *the lengthened* right rein *short* in the left hand. Alas! poor horse! He is then pulled to the left by the left rein, driven to the left by the whip on the right, and then abused for answering these *natural* indications, which he has been trained *habitually* to obey.

Fault in English two-handed riding.

CHAPTER III.

EFFECT OF INDICATIONS.

Retaining, urging, and guiding indications.—To make the horse collect himself.—Canter, right turn, right pass.—Left shoulder in.—Bearing on the mouth.—The horse must be made to collect himself in turning.—And should not be turned on one rein only.—Lady's canter.—The quicker the pace, the greater degree of collection.—French and English mistake here.—The shy horse.—The restive horse.—Truth may be paradoxical.

Retaining, urging, and guiding indications.

There are three sorts of indications, retaining, urging, and guiding.

The indications of the hands are of two sorts, guiding and retaining. Those of the legs and whip are also of two sorts, guiding and urging. Suppose a horse standing still with full liberty and fully extended. If the retaining indication of the hands only are given, he will go backward in a loose and extended form. If, on the contrary, the urging indication of the legs or whip only are given,

he will move forward in a loose and extended form. If these two opposite indications (that is, retaining and urging) be given equally at the same time, the horse will, as it is termed, *collect* himself; that is, being pulled backward, and urged forward, at the same time, in obeying both indications a sort of condensation of the horse results, he bends his neck and brings his head in, and brings his haunches under him. If both indications are continued and increased, the horse will *piaff*, that is, continue collected, in motion, without progressing, or he will make the courbette or terre à terre or rear. If both indications are discontinued, he will resume the extended position of repose. If, again, from this position, both indications are given, but the retaining the strongest, the horse will go backward in a collected form. If both are given, but the urging indication the strongest, he will move forward in a collected form, at a walk, trot, or canter, according to the vivacity with which the indications are given.

To make the horse collect himself.

As far as this is clear enough. But now come some

Canter, right turn, right pass.

niceties which I am puzzled to explain. If the retaining and urging indications are given, but the right rein is felt the strongest, which is the guiding indication of the hand to the right, and the left leg is pressed the strongest, which is the guiding indication of the leg to the right, the horse should either turn to the right, or canter with the right leg, or he should *pass*, that is, cross his legs and go sideways to the right, bending and looking to the right. When the *same* indications are given it seems monstrous to require the horse to discover which of three *different* movements is required of him. In practice the skilful horseman finds no difficulty in making himself clear to his horse, by different modifications of the indications, and of the position of his weight. In theory I can give no rules for it *short enough to be read.*

When the horse is passing to the right, if the indications of the legs are continued the same and those of hands reversed, that is, if the left rein is felt stronger than the right, the horse changes from right pass to "*left shoulder in*" (in towards the centre of the school) that is,

Left shoulder in.

he continues to cross his legs and go sideways to the right, but he bends and looks to the left. As the hands alone make this change, they may be said to guide here. If, from the left shoulder in, the indications of the hands are continued the same, and those of the legs reversed, that is, if the right leg is pressed stronger than the left, the horse changes from left shoulder in to left pass, that is, he continues to look to the left, but crosses his legs and goes sideways to the left. As the legs alone make this change they may be said to guide here.

These are useful lessons, and, together with reining back, should be taught to all horses and all horsemen. Tie a string from eye to eye of the snaffle behind the horse's chin, hold his head by this against a wall, and make him pass, the head leading, by showing him the whip. Make him do the same mounted in obedience to the leg, with the snaffle as in Fig. 13.

Bearing on the mouth.

When the horse is in movement there should be a constant touch, or feeling, or play, or *bearing* between his mouth and the rider's hands. It is impossible to bestow

too much pains and attention on the acquirement of this. It is the index of the horse's actions, temper, and *intentions*. It *forewarns* the rider of what he is about to do, and by it the rider feels *muscularly* without mental attention whether his horse requires more liberty or more collecting. And it is impossible that in this bearing on the horse's mouth, or in the indications of the hands and legs generally, or in shortening and lengthening the reins, the rider can be too delicate, gradual, smooth, firm, and light. The hands should be perfectly free from any approach to a jerk, a loose rein, or uneven feeling on the mouth. The legs should be kept from any action approaching to a kick, except when the spur is given; that should be always present, and when used should be given smartly and withdrawn instantly, but the pressure of the legs should be perfectly smooth and gradual, though, if necessary, strong.

If good riding is worth your attention do not think these things beneath your notice. For the acquirement of the bearing on the horse's mouth, the turning your

horse on the proper rein, smoothness of indications, and, in shortening the reins, the power of making your horse collect himself, and the working together of your hands and legs, are the unseen and unappreciated foundation on which good riding stands. These, and not strength or violence, command the horse. With these your horse will rely on your hand, comply to it, and, without force on your part, he will bend to your hand in every articulation. Without these, however unintentionally on your part, you will be perpetually subjecting him to the severest torture, to defend himself against which he will resist your hand, poke his nose, and stiffen his neck, and every other part of his body. The horse can endure no greater torture than that resulting from an uneven hand. This is known to every hack-cabman. Every hack-cabman has hourly experience that a *job* in the mouth will compel his jaded slave into a trot, when the solicitations of the whip have been long unanswered.

The single case in which a jerk in the mouth is admissible is when your horse is about to kick, and

some one is within reach of his heels. The jerk causes him to throw up his head, and he cannot without difficulty raise his croupe at the same time. But except to save life or limb—supposing no one within reach—hold your hands high, and pull severely, but smoothly; do not jerk. This will in general be sufficient to prevent his kicking, but it is better that your horse should occasionally kick than that he should always go as stiff as a stake, which is the inevitable result of jerking.

Collect the horse to turn.

To keep the horse when in movement to a collected pace, the opposite indications of urging and retaining him must be continued. This working together of the hands and legs and the power of making the horse collect himself are also most essential in turning. A horse should never be turned without being made to collect himself—without being retained by the hands, and urged by the legs, as well as guided by both. That is, in turning to the right both hands should retain him, and the right guide him by being felt the strongest, both legs should urge him, and the left guide him

by being pressed the strongest. The rider should also lean his weight to the right, and the shorter the turn and the quicker the pace, the more the horse should be made to collect himself, and the more both he and his rider should lean to the right. This is well seen, when a man standing on the saddle gallops round the circus. There the man must keep his position by balance alone, and were he not to lean inward—were he for a moment to stand perpendicularly, he would be thrown outside the circle by the centrifugal force. In turning suddenly and at a quick pace to the right, unless the rider leans his weight to the right, he will in like manner have a tendency to fall off on the left. If, by clasping his legs, he prevents this, his horse will be overbalanced to the left when turning to the right. It is bad, in turning to the right, to run into the contrary extreme to the one-handed system, and, slackening the left rein, to haul the horse's head round with the right rein only. The horse's head should not be pulled farther round than to allow the rider to see the right eye; both

Do not turn on one rein only.

legs, and particularly the left leg, should then urge the horse to follow the guiding rein.

A lady, till very skilful, should ride with one bridle only at a time. The other bridle should be knotted loosely, and should lie on the horse's neck.

Lady's canter.

The indications for a lady's horse to canter are an *over* collection and a tapping on the mane with the whip; that is, take your reins *too* short in the left hand, and tap the horse's mane till he canters. When off, if the reins *are* too short, take one in each hand, turn the fore fingers towards you, and let the reins slip. If the horse goes freely up to your hand, keep a rein in each hand. If not, return the right rein to the left hand, and keep the whip ready to urge him up to his bit. If a lady has her reins at full length at a walk she should clutch, cross, canter. If the lady has her reins already crossed in the left hand at a walk, she should by two changes place them *too* short in the left hand before she uses the whip.

The quicker the pace the greater collection.

Every change of pace from slow to quick should be indicated to the horse by a greater collection; the "bride

abattué," and the "reines flottantes" system is a great mistake. So is the direction to the English cavalry (quoted p. 6), to advance the little finger to make the horse advance. To make the horse advance the reins should be tightened; he should be made to collect himself, or he will advance in a loose and extended form. French and English mistake here.

On account of ease to the rider, a lady's horse is only permitted to canter with the right leg. He should never be cantered circles to left, or turned at a canter to the left, as unless the horse shifts his leg it will be an unfair exertion to ask of him. Cantering circles to the right, in open ground, where the horse has nothing to bias him but the indications he receives from the rider, is an admirable practice for a lady. An occasional race—who can canter slowest—is also good practice both for horse and rider. This must not be often repeated, nor must the horse be forced from a fair canter into a hobble or amble. Parade riders are too apt to be contented with wooden paces provided they are short. This is very

vicious. Really to collect himself, a horse must *bend* himself. We cannot too often repeat Ovid's line,—

Flectitis aut freno *colla* sequacis equi.

With horses obstinately addicted to the left leg, which is frequently a result of being longed only to the left, it is a good plan to canter them side-footed to the right, that is, on a level line, on the side of a hill which rises to the right. In this case a very slight slope will incline the horse to take his right leg, and on the side of a steep hill he can scarcely avoid it.

The shy horse.

There are three gradations in riding the shy horse. A man who pulls his horse's head towards what he expects him to shy at, and uses violence, *makes* his horse shy. A man who leaves his horse's head entirely loose, *lets* his horse shy. And a man who turns his horse's head from what he expects him to shy at, *prevents* his horse from shying. Do not imagine that there will be any danger of the horse getting into trouble on the side opposite to what he shies at: the very contrary will be

the case. If, indeed, you pull his head towards the object of his alarm, and oblige him to face it, there is every probability that he will run blindly backward from it. And while his whole attention is fixed before him, he will go backward over Dover cliff if it chance to be behind him. Under such circumstances you cannot too rapidly turn your horse's head and his attention from the fancied, to the substantial ill. But on common occasions the turning his head from what he shies at should be as gradual and imperceptible as possible. No chastisement should be allowed in any case. If he makes a start, you should endeavour not to make a *return* start. You should not, indeed, take more notice of a shy than you can possibly avoid; and unless the horse has been previously brutalised, and to re-assure him, you should not even caress him, lest even that should make him suspect that something awful is about to happen. The common error is the reverse of all this. The common error is to pull the horse's head towards the object of his fear, and when he is facing it, to begin with whip and spur. Expecting

to be crammed under the carriage-wheel, the horse probably rears or runs back into a ditch, or at least becomes more nervous and more riotous at every carriage that he meets. Horses are instantaneously made shy by this treatment, and as instantaneously cured by the converse of it. It is thus that all bad riders make all high-couraged horses shy, but none ever remain so in the hands of a good horseman.

The restive horse.

There is a common error, both in theory and practice, with regard to the restive horse. He is very apt to rear sideways against the nearest wall or paling. It is the common error to suppose that he does so with the view of rubbing his rider off. Do not give him credit for intellect sufficient to generate such a scheme. It is that when there, the common error is to pull his head *from* the wall. This brings the rider's knee in contact with the wall, consequently all farther chastisement ceases; for were the rider to make his horse plunge, his knee would be crushed against the wall. The horse, finding this, probably thinks that it is the very thing desired,

and remains there; at least he will always fly to a wall for shelter. Instead of *from* the wall, pull his head towards it, so as to place his eye, instead of your knee, against it; continue to use the spur, and the horse will never go near a wall again.

To pull a horse *from* what he shies at, and *towards* the wall he rubs you against, are very paradoxical doctrines. But, ὁ μῦθος δήλοι, the fable shows, that truth *may* be paradoxical—that we *can* blow hot and blow cold with the same breath; and it was only the brutal wild man of the woods who drove the civilised man from his den, for performing the feat.

Truth may be paradoxical.

CHAPTER IV.

MECHANICAL AID OF THE RIDER.

The rider cannot raise the falling horse.—Harm is done by the attempt.—The bearing rein.—Mechanical assistance of the jockey to his horse.—Standing on the stirrups.—Difference between the gallop and the leap.—Steeple-chases and hurdle-races unfair on the horse.—The rider should not attempt to lift his horse at a fence.

The rider cannot raise the falling horse.

There is no more common error than to believe that the rider can hold his horse up when he is falling. How often do we hear a man assert that his horse would have been down with him forty times if he had not held him up; that he has taken his horse up between his hands and legs and lifted him over a fence; or that he has recovered his horse on the other side!

These are vulgar errors, and mechanical impossibilities. Could ten men, with hand-spikes, lift the weight of a horse? Probably. Attach the weight to the thin rein of

a lady's bridle. Could a lady lift it with the left hand? I think not; though it is commonly supposed that she could. A pull from a curb will indeed give the horse so much pain in the mouth that he will throw his head up, and this so flatters the hand that its prowess has saved him, that the rider exclaims "It may be impossible, but it happens every day. Shall I not believe my own senses?" The answer is, No, not if it can be explained how the senses are deceived. Otherwise, we should still believe, as, till some few centuries ago, the world did believe, that the diurnal motion was in the sun, and not in the earth. Otherwise we must subscribe to the philosophy of the Turk, who

> "Saw with his own eyes the moon was round,
> Was also certain that the earth was square,
> Because he'd journey'd fifty miles and found
> No sign of its being circular anywhere."

Harm is done by the attempt.

But these errors are not harmless errors. They induce an ambitious interference with the horse at the moment in which he should be left unconfined to the use of his

own energies. If by pulling, and giving him pain in the mouth, you force him to throw up his head and neck, you prevent his seeing how to foot out any unsafe ground, or where to take off at a fence, and in the case of stumbling you prevent an action practically dictated by nature and theoretically justified by philosophy. When an unmounted horse stumbles, nature teaches him to drop his head and neck; philosophy teaches us the reason of it. During the instant that his head and neck are dropping the shoulders are relieved from their weight, and that is the instant in which the horse makes his effort to recover himself. If by giving him pain in his mouth, you force him to raise his head and neck instead of sinking them, his shoulders will still remain encumbered with the weight of them; more than this, as action and reaction are equal and in contrary directions, the muscular power employed to raise the head and neck will act to sink the shoulders and knees. The mechanical impossibility of the rider assisting his horse when falling may be demonstrated thus: no motion can be given to a body without a

foreign force or a foreign fulcrum. Your strength is not a foreign force, since it is employed entirely on the horse. Nor can it be employed on the foreign fulcrum, the ground, through the medium of your reins; as much as you pull up, so much you pull down. If a man in a boat uses an oar, he can accelerate or impede the motion of the boat, because his strength is employed through the medium of the oar on the water, which is a foreign fulcrum. But if he takes hold of the chain at the head of the boat, his whole strength will not accelerate or impede the motion of the boat, because there is neither foreign force nor foreign fulcrum. His whole strength is employed within the boat, and as much as he pulls backward with his hands, he pushes forward with his feet. The baker can lift his basket, but not when he is himself in it.

All the arguments which I have heard adduced against the doctrine here laid down would also go to prove that a horse cannot fall which has a bearing-rein and a crupper, that is, whose head is tied to his tail. Sir Francis Head's

Bearing-rein.

observations on bearing-reins, in the "Bubbles of the Brunnen," are quite philosophical. They should only be used for purposes of parade, or to acquire greater power over a difficult *team*, or *loosely* to keep cart-horses "out of mischief." Sir Francis's observations are also true of the harness used by the peasantry of Nassau which he describes, but this arises from the poverty, not the philosophy of the peasants; those among them, who have money enough to buy smart harness have the most elaborate bearing-reins that I have ever seen. One, a chain, from the lower part of the collar, which binds the horse's chin to his breast, and another over the upper part of the collar, along and above the back to the tail, independent of the terret-pad and crupper. This is tying the horse's head to his tail with a vengeance.* To

* Of all stupid appliances of man to his horse, the most dense is the Austrian and south German mode of driving the einspanner or single horse or a leader. The rein goes single from the driver's hand, and divides into two at the horse's neck. The driver, therefore, has no power of making a distinct indication on either rein: and to turn, he whips and jerks till the horse guesses his meaning.

be consistent, the opponents of the theory which I have laid down should act on this principle—though I have never known them go quite so far. Sed quis custodes custodiet ipsos? What is to prevent the tail from falling forward with the body? They indeed argue, "Surely if you throw back the weight of the shoulders over the croupe of the horse, you relieve his fore-hand, and diminish the chance of his falling." This is rather to propose a new method of preventing a horse from falling, than to prove the advantage of pulling at the mouth while he is falling; for if it is of any advantage to throw your weight back, then the less you pull at the mouth the better, for the more you pull, the less you are at liberty to throw the weight back. But, in truth, it is of no advantage to throw the weight back when the stumble is made. If a position is previously taken up on the croupe of the horse, the pressure will be less on the fore-hand than if you were placed in a forward position. But during the time that the position is in the act of being shifted, that is, during the time that the horse is falling, the act of throwing your

own weight back produces an exactly equivalent pressure forward, in all respects the counterpart of your own motion backward, in intensity and duration. It is useless to dwell on this subject, or to adduce the familiar illustrations which it admits of. It is a simple proposition of mechanical equilibrium, and any one who is conversant with such subjects *must* assent to it.

Mechanical assistance of jockey.

The question whether a jockey can mechanically assist his horse, does not rest on the same footing. I believe he can, thus. If a man sits astride of a chair, with his feet off the ground, and clasps the chair with his legs, by the muscular exertion of his lower limbs he can jump the chair along. The muscular force is there employed on the foreign fulcrum, the ground, through the medium of the legs of the chair. The muscular action strikes the chair downward and backward, and if the chair was on ice it would recede, so also would the feet of a horse in attempting to strike forward. If the chair was on soft ground, it would sink, so also would a horse, in proportion to the force of the muscular stroke. But if

the resistance of the ground is complete, the reaction, which is precisely equal and in a contrary direction to the action, will throw the body of the man upward and forward, and by clasping with his legs he will draw the chair also with him. But he can only accomplish in this way a very little distance with a very great exertion. If the jockey made this muscular exertion every time that his horse struck with his hind feet, his strength would be employed on the foreign fulcrum, the ground, through the medium of his horse's bony frame. Thus the jockey would contribute to the horizontal impulse of his own weight, and exactly in proportion to the muscular power exerted by the jockey, the muscular system of the horse would be relieved. At the same time no additional task is thrown on the bony frame of the horse, since, if the jockey had not used his muscular power on it in impelling his own weight, the muscular system of the horse must have been so employed. It is true, that not much is done after all with a prodigious exertion, but if that little gains six inches in a hardly contested race

it may make the difference of its being lost or won. Thus an easy race is no exertion to a jockey, but after a hardly contested one, he returns with his lips parched, his tongue sticking to the roof of his mouth, and every muscle quivering.

The working a horse up with both hands on his mouth is easier to the jockey than using the whip, and more effective in rousing the horse to his greatest exertion.

Standing on the stirrups.

What is called "standing on the stirrups" consists chiefly in bringing the weight forward on to both thighs. In this position the rider has a greater power of adjusting the balance of his weight to the movements of his horse. In racing it is practically proved to be *essential*. And it is of infinite service to the horse in the long and severe galloping of hunting.

It is surprising that the English are the only people who rise in the stirrup at a trot; it is not surprising that other nations are beginning to follow their example.

Difference between the gallop and the leap.

In galloping, the horse's legs catch the eye most when they are from under him, and he is drawn with all

four from under him. In truth, his hind legs are under him when his fore legs are from under him, and his fore legs are under him when his hind legs are from under him; his hind feet pass over where his fore feet rested, so that from footprint to footprint he clears very little *space*. In fact, owing to what is called *leading* with one leg, the line between his two fore feet and the line between his two hind feet are by no means at right angles to the line of his direction; so that the greatest distance from footprint to footprint is not nearly half his stroke. The leap differs from the gallop not only in the greater *space of ground* cleared by the feet, but in the greater *space of time* for which the feet quit the ground; this last difference is of more importance than might be imagined.

Steeple-chases unfair on the horse.

Antæus was not peculiar in his dependence for strength on contact with his mother earth. In leaping, neither man nor horse can draw breath while in the air, that is, from the time the feet leave the ground till they again touch it. But *quick* breathing (the creber anhelitus)

is not only a consequence of distress for wind, but it is a vital necessity when distressed for wind. And the impossibility to draw breath when off the ground is the reason of the death of horses in steeple-chasing and hurdle-racing; they die of suffocation. The reason is a sufficient one for the discontinuance of such racing and chasing.

A mounted horse will overtake a dismounted horse, his superior in speed. It is the common error to suppose that this results from the mechanical assistance of the rider. The real reason is, that the dismounted horse goes off, like an inexperienced jockey, at his utmost speed. I do not believe that a horse can do this for more than a hundred yards without being distressed for wind (and I speak from experience with Mr. Drummond Hay's barbs at Tangier, which were trained to the feat). The rider starts at a pace which he knows his horse can keep, and the dismounted horse, though he gains on him at first, *comes back to him* as the jockeys say: for a horse which has been distressed for wind in the first hundred

yards, will not arrive at the end of a mile nearly so soon as if he had gone the whole at the best pace he could stay at. Here the assistance from the rider is mental not mechanical.

When mounted it never happens to any horse but an arab or a barb to go his best *muscular* pace. What we call best pace is the best pace a horse can stay at for *wind*. If a common hack were started fresh for the last hundred yards against the best horses in England when finishing their race, he would have it hollow.

The rider should not lift his horse at a fence.

Woe to the sportsman who ambitiously attempts to lift his horse mechanically over a fence on the principle discussed above; he is much more likely to throw him into it. He had better content himself with sitting quietly on his horse, holding him only just enough to keep his head straight and to regulate his pace, and trust the rest to his horse's honour. The horse should feel sufficiently commanded to know that he *must* go, and sufficiently at liberty to know that he *may* use all his capabilities. The body should not previously be thrown back, but as the

horse springs, the lower part of the rider being firmly fixed in the saddle, and the upper part perfectly pliable, the body will fall back of itself; and with strong jumping horses, or at down leaps, the shoulders of fine riders will constantly meet their horse's croupes.

A bad horseman throws his horse down, which a good one does not. That is, because the bad horseman hurries his horse over hard or rough ground, or down hill, or over loose stones—allows him to choose his own ground—lets him flounder into difficulties, and when there, hauls him so that he cannot see, or exert himself to get out of them, and expecting chastisement, the horse springs and struggles to avoid it before he has recovered his feet, and goes down with a tremendous impetus. If he has to cross a rut to the right he probably forces his horse across it when the right foot is on the ground. In this case, unless the horse collects himself and jumps—if he attempts to step across it, the probability is that in crossing his legs he knocks one against the other and falls. The reverse of all this should be the case. If

you have not sufficient tact to feel which of your horse's feet is on the ground, you must allow him to choose his own time for crossing, which will be when the left foot is on the ground.

You should habitually choose your horse's ground for him, for, notwithstanding his often vaunted sagacity and safety, the wisest among horses will, to avoid a moving leaf, put his foot over a precipice. This will become as easy to you as choosing your own path in walking. If your horse has made a false step, or is in difficulties, you cannot leave him too much at liberty, or be too quiet with him. The only notice to be taken is to re-assure him by caressing him, if you see that he expects chastisement from previous brutal treatment.

I will add that you should habitually prevent your horse out-walking or lagging behind his companions; he is either very unsociable or a bad horseman, who does not keep abreast of his companions. Besides, horses, being gregarious, are apt to follow one another. This should not be. Your horse should be in perpetual

obedience to the indications which your hands and legs give him, and to nothing else. These indications should not only decide the pace which he is to take, but deal out to him the rate at which each pace is to be executed, and also determine his carriage during the performance of it; that is, the degree in which he is to collect himself, or the degree of liberty which is to be allowed him.

CHAPTER V.

THE SEAT.

There is one direction which applies to all seats.—Different seats for different styles of riding.—The manége and the Eastern seats are the extremes.—The long stirrup is necessary for cavalry to act in line.—Medium length of stirrup for common riding.

THERE is one direction which, I think, applies to all seats. Turn the thigh from the hip, so as to bring the hollow to the saddle; this places the foot straight to the front, with the heel out and the toe in. Trotting without stirrups, on the thigh only, with the heel down and the toe up, shoulders back, a snaffle-rein in each hand, like a rough-rider (Fig. 13), is the best possible practice for sitting. One direction for all seats.

Farther than this I abstain from giving any particular directions about the seat; because, though I consider the rules here laid down for the hands as applicable to every Different seats for different styles of riding.

species of riding (I have excepted the soldier with his weapon in his right hand), I think there is a peculiar seat proper to many different styles of riding. The extremes of these are the manége and the Eastern styles, both admirable in their way, and perfectly practical, but each wholly inapplicable to the performances of the other.

Manége and Eastern seats the extremes.

What can be more perfect than the seats of M. de Kraut and the Marquis de Beauvilliers, in De la Guérinière's work, or the engraving of M. de Nestier? But I do not think that a man in such a seat would look well, or perform well, in a five-pound saddle, over the beacon course: still less that he could lay the reins on the neck of a well-bred horse, and at full speed lie along his horse's side, and with his own body below his horse's back, prime and load a long Persian gun, jump up and use both hands to fire to the right or left, or over his horse's croupe; or that he could wield a long heavy lance with the power of a Cossack; or at full gallop hurl the djerrid to the rear with the force of a Persian, and again, without any diminution of speed, pick it from the

ground. On the other hand, his peculiar seat renders the Eastern horseman so utterly helpless in the performances of the manége, that he is unable to make his horse rein back, or *pass* sideways a step. And I have seen three hundred Mussulman troops from the northern parts of Persia (each of whom would perform forty such feats as I have mentioned) take more than an hour to form a very bad parade line, in single rank. When one of them was the least too far forward, or had an interval between him and the dressing hand, however small, as he could neither make his horse rein back, nor pass sideways, he was obliged to ride out to the front, turn round to the rear, and ride into the rank afresh, and so in succession every man beyond him. This was an affair of seat; the Eastern horseman's leg does not come low enough to give his horse what are called *sides*.

Long stirrups are necessary for cavalry.

On *sides* depend reining back and passing; on reining back and passing depend *closing* and *dressing*, and consequently the power of acting in line. On *sides* also depends the *central* wheel of threes *on their own ground*.

This is an invaluable attribute to cavalry, regular or irregular. On the plain, the central wheel of threes affords the only true principle of correcting intervals between squadrons, regiments, or brigades, whether in line or in line of columns. Threes also supply the most perfect principle of retiring in line in the presence of an enemy, with the power of instantly showing front, provided that (according to regulation) leaders are appointed to the rear, the same as to the front. In the defile, for advanced or rear-guard movements, threes alone afford the power to occupy the entire width of a lane, road, street, or defile, with the perfect facility of constant and instant alternation of retiring and advancing. Without some *central* wheel, columns or divisions occupying the width of a road or street, *can not retire;* or when retiring, cannot show front to the enemy. With reining back and passing (and they are easily acquired) irregular cavalry might move with the precision of regular cavalry.

I should say, that the most perfect seat for the manége should be shortened for the soldier to give him power

with his weapons; that the military rider should take up his stirrups when he goes hunting; the hunter the same when he rides a race; and for tours de force, I consider the short stirrup-leather and the broad stirrup-iron of the East indispensable—they give, in fact, the strength of the standing instead of the sitting posture. The Cossack retains this standing posture even at a trot; few Eastern horsemen allow that pace at all, but make their horses walk, amble, or gallop.

Medium for common riding.

The English hunting seat is, in point of length, the medium of those mentioned; and perhaps that seat, or something between that and the military seat, is the best adapted to common riding. It unites, in a greater degree than any other, ease, utility, power, and grace.

CHAPTER VI.

MOUNTING AND DISMOUNTING.

Directions to place a lady on her saddle.—Directions to mount at a halt. —In movement.—To dismount in movement.—To vault on at a halt. —Circus for practising these movements.—To pick a whip from the ground.—To face about in the saddle.

To mount a side-saddle.

To mount, a lady should place her left hand on the pummel or leaping horn, the right hand on the off side of the cantle, or as far towards it as possible, and should seat herself between her two hands; she should give the left foot, this should be kept precisely under the weight; if it is given forward (which is the common error) each person is pushed backward one from the other. This should be practised on any piece of furniture; the man should use both his hands, and in this way a weak person may put up the heaviest weight. You may put a man of fifteen stone on the top of a door

with the greatest ease,—try if you can do this in any other way.

To mount, a man should place his left shoulder to his horse's left shoulder, so as to look to the horse's rear; take your whip, reins, and the mane in the left hand, with the right hand take the lower part of the stirrup-leather between the fore-finger and thumb, the little finger on the upper part of the stirrup-iron; take a hop forward facing the saddle and turning your toe to the horse's front *without touching his side*, take the cantle with the right hand and up. If the horse moves on, he only spares you the previous hop, and by walking or running backward with him you may mount almost at a gallop. In taking the right stirrup, avoid touching the horse with the spur, or even pressing him with the leg. If he has been made shy by such usage, place your left hand on the pummel, and with the right hand place the stirrup on the foot, keeping both legs from the horse's sides.

To mount at a halt.

Or in movement.

To dismount in movement, lay the reins on the neck, one or both knotted short; take the pummel with the

To dismount in movement

left hand the cantle with the right, pass the right leg over the neck, shift the right hand to the pummel, and as you descend, the left hand to the flap. With the strength of both arms throw your feet forward in the direction in which the horse is going, this may be done at a gallop.

To vault on or over in movement.

If it is wished to vault on again, while the right hand holds the pummel take the mane with the left, and without taking a step you may go up or over, the quicker the pace the easier.

To vault on at a halt.

It is difficult to jump on to the saddle at a halt, the easiest way is to take the mane as directed for mounting and to jump from the left foot, the right hand coming on to the pummel as you descend into the saddle.

Circus for practice.

To practise these movements, form a circus by placing wattle hurdles on end, leaning outward against the *shores* or staves; take the stirrups off, tie a string over the flaps and the horse's head loosely to this—a man with a driving whip in the middle. Circus riding, I believe, originated in England, in the time of our grandfathers; in Germany it is called "English reiten."

To pick a whip from the ground, take the pummel with the right hand, place the side of the left foot against the girth, the toe between the horse's elbows, bring the back of the right leg on to the top of the saddle, and let yourself down to the full stretch of your right arm; this is very easy at the halt, still easier on the move, *if your horse is quiet.* If you fail, you only dismount on your hands instead of your feet, which on turf may be done innocuously at a canter.

To pick a whip from the ground.

To face about in the saddle place the palms of the hands on the pummel, throw your legs out horizontally over the horse's croupe, turn and come into the saddle facing to the tail. If M. Cui Bono remarks that the last two feats are, like others which I might detail, useless, I answer, that the practice of no feat of activity or strength is useless. Activity and strength, the unctæ dona palæstræ, form a firm assurance against perils, not only to your own life but to the lives of others.

To face about in the saddle.

CHAPTER VII.

THE BIT.

Place of the bit in the mouth.—Principle of the bit.—Action of the common bit.—Action of the Chifney bit.—The loose eye.—The nose-band.—The horse's defence against the bit by the tongue.—Effect of the porte against this defence.—Defence by the lip.—Defence by the teeth.—Bar of the military and driving bit.—Martingale.—Danger does not result from power.

Place of bit in the mouth.

To give the bit its most powerful action it should be placed so low as only just to clear the tusks in a horse's mouth, and to be one inch above the corner teeth in a mare's mouth. The curb-chain should be so tight as not to admit more than one finger freely between it and the chin; these rules are simple, and should be attended to by all riders; a horseman should no more mount with his bit improperly placed, than a seaman should set sail with his helm out of order.

Principle of the bit.

A twitch round the lower jaw, under the tongue, on the

bars or parts of the mouth *bare* of teeth, is perhaps the most certain, powerful, and severe instrument to hold a horse with, and it may be tightened till it becomes a dreadful implement of torture. Next to this is what is called the dealer's halter, which is merely a narrow thong of leather in like manner tied round the lower jaw, under the tongue, but incapable of being tightened or slackened like the twitch. The bit is a most ingenious attempt to grasp the lower jaw by the same bare parts, with the capability of contracting or of perfectly relaxing the grasp, by the application or withdrawal of the powers of the lever. This is the intended action of the bit,—the philosopher's stone,—after which all bit-projectors and bit-makers have laboured; the obstacles to be overcome are various and perhaps insuperable, and indeed could the powers of the lever be employed on such exquisitely sensitive parts as the bare jaws, when within this iron vice, perhaps no hand could be found sufficiently delicate to use them. By pressing your finger-nail against your own gums, you

may form some idea of the agony such an implement would have the power of giving to a horse; anything approaching to harsh, hard, handling with it would drive him desperate, and force him to throw himself over backward; the idea of lifting his weight by such parts grasped with iron is absurd, still more preposterously barbarous that of arresting the headlong impetus of a falling horse by them. Fortunately the power of the rider is here very limited, and the horse defends himself against it by throwing his head upward and backward, and thus the rider only breaks his horse's knees instead of his jaws.

Action of common bit.

But a common bit placed in the common way never touches the horse's bars at all, it is usually placed higher than as directed above, and, as it pivots on the *eye* (that part to which the headstall is attached) when in use, it rises in the horse's mouth—higher directly as the length of the *cheek* (the upper part of the branch or side of the bit) and inside the mouth it has a mixed action, on the fleshy part of the gums above the bars, on the lips, and

(owing to the narrowness of the porte) on the tongue. Outside the mouth, the bit acts on the coarse part of the two jawbones, above the fine part of the chin, where the two jawbones meet, where the curb-chain was originally placed, and where it should act; and I consider this sort of upward *grating* action as calculated to excite, rather than to restrain a horse. A Chifney bit, as it pivots on the mouthpiece, avoids this; its action is quite independent of the headstall, and is precisely on the parts where it is originally placed.

Action of a Chifney bit.

The square-cut eye of the regimental bit greatly impedes its action, besides cutting the leather of the headstall; to remedy this, about a quarter of a century ago, I placed on the bit of the 2nd Life Guards what has since received the name of "the loose eye," and I am proud to see it still where I placed it. It was not intended for common bits; the round eye and the snap hook give them perfect freedom of action. "The loose eye" has, however, become common on common bits.

The loose eye.

A noseband prevents the cheek of the bit and of the

The noseband.

headstall from going forward, and so impedes the true action of the bit. To close the horse's mouth, in order that a high porte may act against the roof of the mouth, is a monstrous notion. I had the honour to abolish nosebands in the 2nd Life Guards.

Defence against the bit by the tongue.

The horse employs his tongue as a defence against the bit, passively as a cushion to protect the more tender parts on which the bit is intended to work, and actively he uses the muscles of the tongue, in resistance to it: this may be proved by using a straight mouthpiece, or one arched upward or downward, but without a porte. From under these a horse will never withdraw his tongue, and he will go with a dead bearing on the hand, though equal, that is, not more on one side of the mouth than on the other. Even a very narrow porte, not a quarter the width of the tongue, will suffice, when pressure is used, to defeat this defence, and completely to engage the tongue within the porte. But being then much compressed, it will sustain a great part of the leverage, and the horse will endeavour still more to make his tongue the fulcrum

Effect of the porte.

of the bit, and to relieve his bars from that office, by protruding his tongue, and thus forcing the thick part of it within the porte. If the porte is made wide so as to allow space for the tongue, the corners formed by the porte and the cannons (those parts between the porte and the branches) are apt to work injuriously against the bars, and also to slip quite off them, which makes the action of such bits uncertain, though they are very effective and severe if the mouthpiece is no wider than the horse's mouth. But the mouthpiece which gives complete room for the tongue, and yet brings the cannons into perfect contact with the bars, is that of which M. de Solleysell claims the invention, and which he describes as "à pas d'asne, with the porte gained from the thickness of the heels." Let the mouthpiece be in width four inches inside, this I believe, will be sufficient for most horses, since the part of a horse's mouth where the bit should work is narrowest, and the cheeks should consequently be set outward. Let the entrance to the porte, between the heels be three-fourths of an inch,

and let the porte open laterally to two and a half inches inside.

Defence by the lip.

But when the tongue is perfectly disengaged from the bars by the porte, the horse will still defend them by drawing his lip in on one side, interposing it between one bar and one cannon of the bit, and pulling on one side of his mouth only. It is the common error to attribute this to nature having formed one bar stronger than the other; but these and other tricks are not to be looked on as the results of natural defects, but as habitual defences against the pain caused by a hard, harsh bearing on the horse's bars; with a smooth and gentle bearing he will not take to them, or will discontinue them. For callous bars Xenophon prescribes gentle friction with oil! and the practice of the Augustan age of the manége, recommended by Berenger was to amputate that part of the tongue which a horse protruded or lolled out!

Defence by the teeth.

One of the most common defences against the bit is taking the *leg* (the lower part of the branch) of the bit with the corner tooth. This is easily counteracted by a

lip-strap. It should fasten *round* the leg of the bit, so as to slide up and down, and should be tight enough to be horizontal.

Bar of the military and driving bit.

The reason for the bar at the lower part of a driving bit or a military bit, is to prevent the horse catching his bit over his neighbour's reins. The French cavalry ordonnance, in discussing the merits of this bar, does not seem to be aware of its origin and meaning.

If the theories here laid down are true, it will result that the common bits are best for the common run of coarse hands, as being less severe, from their action being divided and on less sensible parts; and also, that they should be curbed more loosely, and placed higher in the horse's mouth, in proportion to the degree of coarseness to be expected in the rider's hand. So although a martingale spoils hands, it may be used as a defence, that is, supposing the necessity of mounting a high, harsh hand on a susceptible horse. In this case an easy snaffle with a running martingale will at least

Martingale.

counteract the height of the hand, and the friction will to a certain degree steady and counteract the unequal bearing on the horse's mouth. A low smooth hand is the only true martingale: this will never be acquired as long as an implement is used which tends to permit harsh, high handling with impunity to the rider.

The snaffle, even of a double bridle, should be sewed to the bridle; it is safer for leading, and it is only the curb bit which you wish to have the power of changing. The reins should be thin and supple, they will last the longer for it; for reins break from being stiff and cracking, and suppleness of reins is essential to delicacy of hand.

As the collected paces of the parade are not in vogue in England, a gentleman rarely has occasion for his curb at all, except to train a horse for a lady, or in the case where a commanding power is required over a horse who, by bad or cruel handling, has become a puller, or habitually restive, or whose

animal impetuosity or ferocity leads him to attack his neighbours. In such a case a Chifney bit, with the mouth-piece described, with half the length of leg, and a third part of the weight, will be found more effective than a clipper bit; and at the same time that weight is got rid of, danger is avoided, which, with branches running far below the horse's mouth, is very great in going through living fences or coverts.

With such a bit, so placed, I have seen the taper tips of the most beautiful fingers in the world constrain the highest-mettled and hottest thorough-bred horses, and "rule them when they're wildest." It is an implement which will give to the weakest hand the power of the strongest, which most of the strongest hands cannot be trusted to wield, and which, if ladies' hands are light, equal, and smooth, will give them the power of riding horses such as few men might venture to mount.

Provided the indications from the hand are true and

Danger does not result from power.

gentle, no danger to the rider nor resistance from the horse will result from power, but on the contrary, safety to the rider and obedience from the horse. This is the only mode of accounting for the fact that there are thousands of hands which perform to admiration in driving, with the most severe bits, but which are quite unfit to be trusted in riding with anything but a snaffle bridle; for, in driving, the terret-pad prevents false indications on the bit, therefore to ensure true ones being given, two hands are used, or when one only, two fingers are placed between the reins instead of the fourth finger only, consequently the horse obeys the slightest touch, and consequently his mouth and the driver's hand become mutually more light; but put the driver and driven together, as rider and ridden, with the same bit, the reins in one hand, and the fourth finger only between them, and what will follow? The rider gives a wrong indication; the horse turns the wrong way, or stops; the rider insists, and applies force; the horse rears; one or both fall back-

wards; the blame is laid on the severity of the bit, instead of the wrong application of it, and the brute force of the rider.

And observe, that it is power which I advocate, and not force; "'Tis well to have the giant's strength, but tyrannous to use it like a giant."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SADDLE AND SIDE-SADDLE.

A side-saddle should have no right-hand pummel.—The leaping horn.—Surcingle. — Stirrup-leather. — Stirrup-iron. — Girthing. — To avoid riding on the buckles of the girths.

No right-hand pummel.

A SIDE-SADDLE should have no right-hand pummel; it is useless to the seat, and impedes the working of the right hand on the reins. The appearance when mounted is infinitely improved by the absence of it. The saddle

Leaping horn.

should have what is called a third pummel, or leaping-horn. In case of any unusual motion of the horse, such as leaping, an ebullition of gaiety, or violence from any other cause, by pressing upwards with the front part above the left knee, and downwards with the back part above the right knee, a wonderfully strong grasp is obtained, much stronger than the grasp obtained by the mode in which men ride. This will be quite clear to you

if, when sitting in your chair, you press your two knees together, and afterwards, by crossing them over, press them, one down and the other up. Besides this, when a man clasps his horse, however firmly it fixes the clasping parts, it has a tendency to raise the seat from the saddle. This is not the case with the clasp obtained in a side-saddle; and, for a tour de force, I find I am much stronger in a side-saddle than in my own. There is no danger in this third pummel, since there is not the danger of being thrown on it; more than this, it renders it next to impossible that the rider should be thrown against or upon the other pummels. In the case of the horse *bucking*, without the leaping-horn, there is nothing to prevent the lady from being thrown up; the right knee is thus disengaged from the pummel, and all hold lost. The leaping-horn prevents the left knee from being thrown up, and from that fulcrum great force may be employed to keep the right knee down in its proper place. If the horse, in violent action, throws himself suddenly to the left, the upper part of the rider's body

will tend downwards to the right, the lower limbs upwards to the left. Nothing can counteract this but the bearing afforded by the leaping-horn. This tendency to over-balance to the right causes so many ladies to guard themselves against it by hanging off their saddles to the left. The leaping-horn is also of infinite use with a hard puller, or in riding down steep places; without it, in either case, there is nothing to prevent the lady from sliding forward. It has also the advantage that, should one rider like it, and another not, it is easily screwed on or taken off.

The saddle should be kept in its place by the elastic webbing girths, and not, as the common error is—probably from the facility of tightening it—by the hard, unyielding, leather surcingle. The use of this surcingle is to prevent the small flap on the off side from turning up, and the large flap on the off side from being blown about with wind; and it should not be drawn tighter than is sufficient for these purposes. The part coming from the near side should not be attached, as at present,

Surcingle.

to the small flap, but to the lower part of the large flap on the near side. This will leave the small flap on the near side loose, as in a man's saddle, *and will allow liberty for the use of the spring bar*. It will also lessen the friction against the habit and leg, by rendering the side of the saddle perfectly smooth, except the stirrup-leather. To lessen the friction from that I recommend a single thin strap, as broad as a man's stirrup-leather, instead of the present double, narrow, thick one. Of three sorts of single stirrup-leathers the smoothest is with a loop to go over the spring-bar, and with an adjusting buckle just above the stirrup-iron: or the strap may take off and on the iron by a slip loop, and passing over the spring-bar as usual, be fastened, and its length adjusted, by a *loose* buckle, which, though it is only attached to the strap by the tongue, is perfectly secure. For hunting I always use a single strap, sewn to the iron, with a **D** above the knee, and with a double strap and buckle between the **D** and the spring-bar. The lady's stirrup-leather, which passes under the horse's body, and

Stirrup leather.

is fixed to the off side of the side-saddle, is supposed to prevent the saddle from turning round. This is a mechanical error. But the great objection to this sort of stirrup-leather is, that it cannot with safety be used with the spring-bar; for when off the bar it remains attached to the saddle, and acts as a scourge to the horse. I once saw a frightful instance of this. The lady's stirrup-iron should be in all respects the same as a man's, and, to make assurance doubly sure, it should open at the side with a spring. This might be useful in case of a fall on the off side, when the action of the spring-bar of the saddle might be impeded. But if the stirrup is large and heavy, it is next to impossible that the foot should be caught by it. It is the common error to suppose that persons are dragged owing to the stirrup being too large and the foot passing through it, but the reason is its being too small and light, it then sticks to the foot and clasps it by the pressure of the upper part of the stirrup above the foot, and the lower part on the sole of the foot.

Stirrup-iron.

A side-saddle should be girthed very tightly, since a

Girthing.

lady sits only by the saddle. The girths should always be felt *after* the weight of the rider is in the saddle. The girths of a man's saddle should never be tight. The inner girth only should loosely hold the saddle; the outer girth is merely a safety girth, in case of the inner one giving. This is of consequence for the horse's breathing in galloping, since his ribs must expand every time he inhales, or draws breath.

To avoid buckles of girths.

I think that one holder on each side of a man's saddle should be placed as far forward, and one on each side as far backward, as possible without showing beyond the outside stirrup flap. This separates the buckles of the girths, and makes a smooth flat bearing for the thigh of the rider. The girths must cross from the front holder on one side to the back holder on the other; or they may be passed through a loose loop below to prevent their separating. The double-stirrup leather and the riding exactly on the buckles of the girths, are great abominations. I go farther in this way myself, and cut off the inside girth flap immediately below the tree of the

saddle. It is wholly unnecessary when the buckles of the girths are removed from under the weight of the rider. The absence of this inner girth-flap gives a much firmer, and to me a much pleasanter, seat; while to the horse the saddle is much cooler, and a little lighter. If, on trial, this is not liked, the girth-flap is easily sewed on again, or the holders are still more easily replaced. It is very rash to recommend even the smallest possible change which one has not tested well; and I have never tried dividing the girth buckles with the side-saddle. But I should think that if they were divided on the near side only, with a loop to keep the girths together below, it might be an improvement.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SHORT REIN.

The short rein should be used when one hand is occupied.—Its use to a soldier.—Its use with the restive horse.—It should not be used in hunting, or in swimming a horse.—Objection to it for common riding.—Used by postilion.—Short rein of the Eastern horseman.

Should be used when one hand is occupied.

If you have anything to carry which entirely occupies one hand, and which occasionally may require both, such as an umbrella in wind, or an over-fresh horse to lead at a quick pace, tie up one or both reins; it obviates the possibility of a horse, wild with his head, drawing the reins through the hand, and consequently the necessity of using both hands to shorten them. At the same time, being held with the breadth of the whole hand, at the centre, distinct single-handed indications can be given on the reins.

A soldier should go to single combat with one of his

Its use to a soldier.

reins in this way. To have to use his sword hand to shorten his reins may make the difference of life or death to him. In the case of his adversary gaining his left rear, by dropping the reins the sword is instantly shifted to the left hand, and the short rein is instantly grasped with the right hand at the proper length. As the soldier is only trained to use his sword with his right hand (this might be remedied by my sword exercise), it is not likely that his left hand should be a match for his adversary's right, but he will at least be able to keep his adversary at a distance by striking or pointing at his horse's head. This would be a hopeless affair with the right hand, particularly for a cuirassier. To be able to present a pistol to the rear with the left hand would be invaluable in such a case. The power to drop and instantly resume the short rein also allows two hands to be occasionally used to the lance or carbine; a skirmisher therefore should have one rein tied up. A pulling horse may be ridden with one or both reins tied, also a restive horse; his usual mode of resistance is running back and rearing, because from fear

Its use with the restive horse.

of his falling backward chastisement usually ceases then. In such a case quit the reins, lay hold of the mane with both hands, ply both spurs, even while the horse is on his hind legs, and the moment he flies from them, the reins are seized in the mode to be used most powerfully without requiring any adjustment. If the horse will not answer the spur, with the left hand hold the mane, and with the right ply the whip under the flank even when he is on his hind legs.

Should not be used in hunting, or swimming a horse.

The reins should never be tied in hunting, or in swimming a horse, since, by catching across the neck, they act like a bearing rein, and oblige the horse to carry his head up and his nose in. In hunting this would bring his hind legs on his fences, and oblige him to leap from the top of his banks and *to land all fours*, instead of extending himself and letting himself down gently. In swimming it obliges him to keep his whole head and neck out of water; I very nearly drowned a horse in this way in the Serpentine.

Objection

For common riding the objection is that you cannot

for common riding.

lengthen or shorten the rein; therefore, to give more liberty, or to shorten the rein, the hand must go from or to the body. If, therefore, the reins are tied so that the hands should be at a convenient distance from the body when the horse is collected, they would be at a very inconvenient distance when he is extended. To remedy this, in the East, where the short rein is very universal, the double part of the bridle is prolonged by a single strap; this strap is used as a whip, and hence the whip of the Hussar attached to the reins; hence, also, as I imagine, the Austrian driving rein described page 54. When fossil remains of the extinct postboy shall be discovered, it will be seen that he used the short rein, and with great propriety; since his horse may be said to have been always "au trot," and needed only one degree of collection.

Short rein of the East.

Used by postilion.

CHAPTER X.

COLT-BREAKING.

Colt-breaking is the best possible lesson for the rider.—The head-stall.—The snaffle.—Longeing.—Saddling.—Mounting.—Sermon to the colt-breaker.—The noblest horse resists the most.—The horse has a natural *right* to resist.—The colt wants no suppling.—He wants to be taught the meaning of your indications.—And to be brought to obey them.—The leaping-bar.—Fetch and carry.

Colt-breaking the best lesson for riding.

The very best lesson for a horseman, young or old, is colt-breaking; and if in the attempt the *young* horseman fails to do the colt justice, he will at least do him less injury than the country colt-breaker, or the generality of grooms.

I shall detail the plan of an *old* horseman; though, perchance, its want of "dresses, scenery, and decoration" may offend, my chief implements being a stick, some string, and some carrots.

I have always said that the colt is half broken when he will come to your whistle or call in the field, and eat carrots out of your hand; and that he is quite broken when you have got the head-stall on him.

The colt *should* wear a head-stall from the earliest days, and be held by the head while he is rubbed and caressed.

The head-stall.

If this has been neglected, get him into a loose box; take the front off the head-stall, described page 125. Do not (as is the common error in this and in bridling) face the colt, and hold out the head-stall with both hands, as if you *wished* to frighten him; but keep the head-stall in your left hand, caress the colt with your right hand, and, with your right shoulder to his left shoulder, pass the right hand under his jaws on to the front part of his head. Bring the left hand up to the right, and, with a hand on each cheek-strap, pass the top over the ears on to the neck, *if you can*. Fasten the throat-lash tight enough to prevent its being rubbed over the ears. Tie a piece of cord, a yard long, to the off side, D, of the head-stall; pass the cord through the near side, D.

Accustom the colt to see and to be held by this. It is very powerful, as it forms a slip knot round his nose, and prevents his pulling with the top of his head; and it keeps the two cheek-straps back, which otherwise might injure the colt's eyes. When he is used to the short cord, tie a long knotted cord to it. Use gloves when you first take the colt out, and place yourself so that if he bolts you may pull him sideways gradually into a circle.

To get him to lead, place him between you and a fence; keep abreast of his shoulder, and show the stick towards his croupe. When he is subjected to the cord, take a snaffle-bit with a piece of string to each eye (what is called a T is best), tie it to the off side, D, hold the nose-band with the right hand, take the snaffle with the left, induce him to open his mouth by passing the thumb between his lips on to the *bars* (part *bare* of teeth), place the snaffle in his mouth, and tie it to the near side, D. If you have any difficulty, a long string may be used to the near side of the snaffle, and passed through the D. If the colt runs back you still hold him

The snaffle.

with the snaffle under the jaws. When bridled tie a piece of string from eye to eye of the snaffle, so as to hang under the chin; fasten the long cord to this and lead him by it, and use him to be held by this chin-strap. By the common method, he is never held by the mouth till he is mounted.

Next tie a piece of cord round his girthing place, the two ends on the ridge of his back. Make a rein of string and tie it with these ends just tight enough to prevent the colt grazing; you may then pick grass and give it to him, whistling at the same time. He will soon follow you loose, play by your side, leap fences, and come to your whistle like a dog.

To accustom the colt to be tied by the head, pass the long cord over a gate, and slacken and tighten as may be required.

Ask leave of the colt to hang your tackle in his hovel; or if he lives in a field, lay it in the hedge to be ready whenever you can spare time "to go for a walk" with him.

For these lessons, and as far as possible for all lessons, the law should be dulcia sunto; but after teaching your child its alphabet in ginger-bread, the time must come when he must go to school.

The simplest act of obedience is longeing. In longeing you should walk a circle inside the colt's circle. The long stick should be constantly held up towards his croupe, to keep him on, but ready to be shown towards his head to keep him out. When you stop, and lower the stick, the colt comes in for a piece of carrot. The long cord should never be tight. If the colt's head is pulled in and his croupe driven out of the circle, mental sulks and muscular mischief must ensue. Nothing so surely generates spavins, curbs, and thorough-pins. When skilful, you may make the colt change without stopping, or longe a figure of 8. This may be done, even without the long cord, by the centripetal force of carrots and the centrifugal force of the stick. When this is done in the open field it looks like mesmerism or magic. When in this way you have

Longeing.

made the colt thoroughly to love, honour, and obey you, the saddling, mounting, and riding, follow almost of course.

Saddling. Without stirrups, and with only one girth turned over the seat, place the pummel of the saddle on your right shoulder, and your right hand under its cantle, caress the colt with your left hand, and do not attempt to put the saddle on him till your left shoulder touches his. When girthed tie the string surcingle over the saddle; besides holding the reins, it now prevents the flaps Mounting. flying up. When used to this, use him to the stirrups. Mount in a loose box with three girths, the head tied loosely to the saddle and a second snaffle bridle. Fill your pockets with tares or hay and feed him from his back. Out of doors mount while the colt is browsing a hedge. Quiet riding must do the rest, the main thing to keep the colt straight on, or to turn him, being the stick shown instantly on either side by the turn of the wrist.

Thus far the *practice* of colt-breaking; and in this way

the colt will be very easily *tackled:* I do not expect so easily to tackle his rider, but I will try.

As Lord Pembroke remarks in his admirable treatise, his hand is the best who gets his horse to do what he wishes with the least force, whose indications are so clear that his horse cannot mistake them, and whose gentleness and fearlessness alike induce obedience to them. The noblest animal will obey such a rider, as surely as he will disregard the poltroon, or rebel against the savage. I say the noblest, because it is ever the noblest among them which rebel the most. For the dominion of man over the horse is an usurped dominion. And in riding a colt, or a restive horse, we should never forget that he has by nature the *right* to resist; and that, *at least, as far as he can judge*, we have not the right to insist.

Sermon to the colt-breaker.

The noblest horse resists the most.

Has a *right* to resist.

When the stag is taken in the toils, the hunter feels neither surprise nor anger at his struggles and alarm; and indeed he would be very unreasonable were he to chastise the poor animal on account of them. But there

is no more reason in nature why a horse should submit, without resistance, to be ridden, than the stag to be slain —why the horse should give up his liberty to us, than the stag his life. In both cases our "wish is father to the deed." And if our arrogance insinuates that a bountiful Nature created these animals simply for our service, assuredly bountiful Nature left them in ignorance of the fact. And it is to the sportsman and the colt-breaker that we must apply, if we wish to know whose victims are the most willing. Not to the cockney casuist, whose knowledge of the stag is confined to his venison, and who never trusts himself on the horse till it has been "long trained, in shackles, to procession pace." If he did, he would find that the unfettered four-year-old shows precisely the same alarm and resistance to the halter as the stag does to the toils; and in breaking horses, the thing to be aimed at, next to the power of indicating our wishes, is the power of winning obedience to those wishes. These, and these only, are the two things to be aimed at, from the putting the first halter on the colt, to his per-

formance of the pirouette renversée au galop—which is perhaps the most perfect trial and triumph of the most exquisitely finished horsemanship, and in which the horse must exert every faculty of his mind to discover, and every muscle of his body to execute, the wishes of his rider.

The colt needs no suppling.

It is a vulgar error—an abuse of terms—the mère jargon of jockeyship, to say that the horse needs *suppling* to perform this, or any other air of the manége, or anything else that man can make him do; all that he wants is to be made acquainted with the wishes of his rider, and inspired with the desire to execute them. For example, among the innumerable antics which I have seen fresh young troopers go through, when being led to and from the farrier's shop, I have seen them perform this very air, the pirouette renversée au galop to the right, round the man who leads them; I have seen them perform the figure perfectly, with the exception that, instead of the right nostril leading, the head and neck have been straight on the diameter of the circle. At the same time détacher l'aiguillette,

He wants to know your meaning.

And that he must obey.

and mingle courbettes, ballotades, and even cabrioles with it,—combinations which La Broue, the Duke of Newcastle, De la Guerinière, or Pellier would scarcely dream of. This a horse will do in the gaiety of his heart, and without requiring any suppling; take the same horse into the school, follow him with the whip, and try to *make* him do it, he will think you a most unreasonable person; he will by no means be able to discover your meaning, and will, if you press him, finish by being exceedingly sulky. Mount him, and try to indicate your wishes to him through the medium of your hands, legs, and whip, or if you prefer the terms, to give him their *aid* and *support*. I will venture to say that you will be nearer two years than one, before you can get him to do what he has not only done but done for his own delight. In the mean time, if during his two years of *suppling* you have never given him a false indication or ever forced him, he will be no more stiff than when he first began to be *suppled*. But if, as a million riders out of a million and one would

have done, you have been in the constant habit of doing both, the horse will long ago have become as stiff as a piece of wood. Is it to be supposed that the best suppled manége horse is more supple than the colt at the foot of his dam? Can any one who has watched his pranks think so? How often have I been told by a rider to observe how supple his horse's neck had become! That he could now get his horse's head round to his knee, whereas he could not at first accomplish more than to see his horse's eye. If the same horse, loose, wished to scratch his shoulder or his ribs, would he not forthwith do it with his teeth?

When a cabriolet or cart is turned in a narrow street or road, the horse is forced to make half a pirouette, without any questions being asked as to his capabilities or suppleness; and the rein being pulled strongest on one side, the whip applied on the other, the shafts to prevent his turning short, and with evident reason why he cannot go a-head, he sees what is required, and does

it without difficulty; but the same horse will not do the same mounted, in the middle of a grass-field, with nothing but his rider's *aids* to bias him, or to indicate what is required of him. Why? either because he can't understand your *aids*, or you can't enforce obedience to them: these will be the reasons, not his want of suppleness.

The great thing in horsemanship is to get your horse to be of your party—not only to obey, but to obey willingly. For this reason a young horse cannot be begun with too early, and his lessons cannot be too gradually progressive. The great use of longeing is, not that it supples your horse—it is a farce to suppose that—but that, next to leading, it is the easiest act of obedience which you can exact from him. In this way it is an admirable lesson.

Placing the colt between the pillars of the stall is admirable as a lesson of submission and obedience; by degrees he may be even cleaned there. The brush acts as the urging indication; the reins inform him that he is

not to advance; the result is that he collects himself to the bit. Here, then, the common theory would make him to be taken up and collected, not between the hands and legs, not "dans la main et dans les talons," but dans the sides of the stall and dans the horse brush. It is precisely the same as putting the horse between the pillars in a manége, which is an admirable explanatory practice to a horse. With the whip in skilful hands, the sides of the stall give infinite advantage over the pillars in the manége; both teach the horse the same lesson, namely, that when urged up to the bit—that is, when urged and retained at the same time—these contradictory indications mean that he is required to collect himself. Anything which facilitates the understanding of this bit of information is of infinite value; for the colt, like the satyr in the fable, is apt to kick against this blowing hot and blowing cold at the same time. Mount the colt, and try these opposite indications; he will do anything but obey them, anything but collect himself. If you insist, he will resist. He will end in overt acts of rebellion, or

at least in dogged sulks; and that from not understanding, or not choosing to obey your *aids*, not from want of suppleness. Let art supple the temper and understanding of the colt, and leave nature to supple his limbs. By holding the colt's head against a wall by the chin-strap, he may be made to pass sideways to either hand by showing him the whip. He should also be taught to rein back; this is best done in a narrow gangway. The leaping-bar is a good exercise of obedience. The bar itself should be only six feet long; the posts which support it should be four feet six inches high; the side-rails thirty feet in length, and they should slope down to three feet; they should rest on the tops of the posts, and be flush with them, and perfectly smooth, so that the long cord may pass freely over them without catching. The colt should walk half way up the gangway, thence a slow trot. Pass the reins of the snaffle through the left eye of the snaffle, and fasten the long cord to them. Hold the right rein close to where it passes through the eye, it will clasp the lower jaw like a slip-

The leaping-bar.

knot and give you great power. All over-fresh horses should be led in this way; without it a horse will pull with the top of his head with force sufficient to beat any man. Keep the bar low, or even on the ground, as long as the horse is nervous.

The whole affair of colt-breaking is an affair of patience, you cannot have too much forbearance: put off the evil day of force. Forgive him seventy times seven times a-day, and be assured that what does not come to-day will to-morrow. The grand thing is to get rid of dogged sulks and coltishness; of that wayward, swerving, hesitating gait, which says, "here's my foot, and there's my foot;" or, "there is a lion in the street, I cannot go forth." This is the besetting sin of colts; and this it is which, on the turf, gives so great an advantage to a young horse to have another to *make play*, or *cut out the running* for him. For this indisposition to go freely forward results as well from their seeing no necessity to give up their will to yours, as from their incapacity to perceive and obey the indications of their rider without

swerving, shifting the leg, &c., and additional labour to themselves. All this is spared to the young horse by the follow-my-leader system.

Everything should be resorted to to avoid alarm on the colt's side and force on the man's, and gradually to induce familiarity and cheerful obedience—to reconcile him to the melancholy change from gregarious liberty to a solitary stall and a state of slavery. I should say that he is the best colt-breaker who soonest inspires him with the animus eundi—who soonest gets him to go freely straight forward—who soonest, and with least force, gets the colt without company five miles along the road from home. Violence never did this yet; but violence increases his reluctance, and makes it last ten times longer. Indeed, it causes the colt to stiffen and defend himself, and this never is got rid of. It is true that by force you may make him your sullen slave, but that is not the object; the object is to make him your willing subject. Above all things, do not be perpetually playing the wolf to him; deal in rewards where it is possible,

and in punishment only where it cannot be avoided. Be assured that the system will *answer*.

Crede mihi, res est ingeniosa *dare*.

It is, no doubt, our duty to create the happiness and to prevent the misery of every living thing; but with our horse this is also a matter of *policy*. The colt should be caressed, rubbed, and spoken to kindly. He should be fed from the hand with anything he may fancy, such as carrot, or apple, or sugar, and be made to come for it when whistled to or called by name.

"Quis expedivit Psittaco suum χαιρε? . . . .
Venter."

Fetch and carry.

On an unlittered part of the stable, with the horse loose, throw pieces of carrot on the floor; he will learn to watch your hand like a dog. Then tie a piece of carrot to a piece of stick. When he lifts this push a piece of carrot between his lips where there are no teeth, and take the stick from his mouth. He will soon learn to pick up your stick, whip, glove, or handkerchief, and

to bring it in exchange for the reward; or when mounted, will put his head back to place it in your hand.

Stand on the outside of a door which opens towards you. Show the horse carrots through the opening: he will push the door open to get the carrot. By always repeating the word "door," he will soon open or shut a door at command, or a gate, even when mounted.

These may be "foolish things to all the wise," but nothing is useless which familiarises the horse, which increases the confidence and intimacy between him and his rider, or which teaches him to look to man for the indications of his will, and to obey them, whether from fear, interest, or attachment.

CHAPTER XI.

THE HORSE AND HIS STABLE.

Condition depends on food, work, and warmth.—So does the difference between the *breeds* of horses.—The terseness of the Arab is the result of hard food.—So is that of our thorough-bred horse.—Different *breeds* result from different natural conditions.—Crossing is only necessary where natural conditions are against you.—We do not attend enough to warmth.—We should get fine winter coats by warmth instead of singeing.—No fear of cold from fine coats.—The foot should be stopped with clay.—The sore ridge.—Stable breast-plate.—The head-stall.—Never physic, bleed, blister, or fire.—Food for condition.—Rest for strains.—Nature for wounds.—Miles for shoeing.—The horse should have water always by him.—And should stand loose.—No galloping on hard ground, either by master or man.—He who cripples the horse kills him.

Condition depends on food, work, warmth.

For perfect health and condition three things are necessary, good food, work, warmth. For appearance a fourth may be added, cleaning. To suppose cleaning necessary for health is nonsense. Do you clean your sheep?—the stags in your park?—or the horses young

and old in the breeding stud? But, speaking liberally, a horse which is not worked cannot be clean and a horse which is worked and clothed cannot be dirty. A horse cannot be clothed too heavily summer or winter short of perspiring.

So does the difference between breeds of horses.

But it is not only that the present passing condition of the horse depends solely on food, work, and warmth, but the permanent structure and stature of the horse depend on them; that is, the difference between what are called different *breeds* of horses depends solely on these three things.

The Arab has the result of hard food.

The Arab has a legend that his horse came from the stable of King Solomon. From the book of Kings it appears that Solomon was a great horse dealer. He imported them largely from Egypt, and he supplied certain kings with them. The merchandise which he received from Arabia is enumerated, and though it is not stated that he supplied horses in part payment for this merchandise, it is not improbable that he did so. Speaking liberally, in Arabia the sole food of the horse is

barley and straw; and the terseness of structure of the Arab may be said to be the result of three thousand years of hard food, if we reckon only from the *modern* horse-keeper King Solomon. Fuerant autem in Egypto semper præstantissimi equi. And, shades of Bunsen! how many thousand years of hard food shall we add to the account for our horses' Egyptian ancestry? Moses and Miriam sang their dirge on the shore of the Red Sea, in the reign of a *mediæval* Pharaoh, but their "early progenitors," as Mr. Darwin would phrase it, might have enjoyed the barley of the *ancient* King Menes. To hard food we must add early work, for the Arab is worked at two years old.

So is our thorough-bred horse.

Our thorough-bred horse, the descendant of the Arab, has been bred under the same natural conditions somewhat improved; that is, he has had *better* hard food in unlimited quantity, he is earlier trained, the goodness of both sire and dam are proved to an ounce, and performance only is bred from. What is the consequence? In Evelyn's days Arabs and barbs raced at Newmarket.

In later days, in the give and take plates there, winners are recorded of thirteen hands high, and the size of a stud horse of fourteen hands was advertised. Now, if a horse is under sixteen hands his size is not mentioned, and all the world is our customer at £5000 or £6000 a horse. And if more people had the skill to ride him, the merits of the thorough-bred horse as a hunter would be better known; though, indeed, under any circumstances, it is but the sweepings of the training stable which descends to the hunting field or private life.

All *breeds* result from natural conditions.

The first axiom of the breeder is—est in equis patrum virtus—"Like produces like." But the second axiom is, "The goodness of the horse goes in at his mouth." The moral is, that like produces like only under like natural conditions. Turn out all the winners of the last ten years to breed on Dartmoor or in Shetland; what would be the betting about a colt or a filly so bred for the Derby or Oaks? The qualities of the race-horse—the accumulation of thousands of years—are lost in the first generation. Continue to breed him under

these conditions, and the finest horse in the world, or that the world ever saw, becomes a Dartmoor or Shetland pony, worth £5 instead of £5000. Such are the changes worked by natural conditions; though with Mr. Darwin they count for nothing, or for next to nothing.

In the permanent fat pastures of the temperate and insular climes, the horse is built up to eighteen hands high, with a width and weight infinitely more than proportionate to his height, if we compare him to the southern horse. In the arid south, by no contrivance of man or "natural selection" can a horse of *weight* be produced; though you may breed the terse horse of the south in the north by keeping him on terse food.

Crossing not necessary.

Crossing is only good where you wish to breed animals against natural conditions, as heavy horses on terse food, or Leicester sheep on the downs, or small Alderney cows on rich pastures. Then, the more the breed is crossed by animals bred under favourable natural conditions the better. No horse is so bred in-and-in as our thorough-

bred horse and the Arab, and, of course, all *pure* breeds must be bred in-and-in.

The above effects of food and work are evident and well understood. But we do not sufficiently attend to warmth. We see that if the finest-coated Arab or thorough-bred horse is turned out year after year, he will get a winter coat as thick as a Shetland pony. But besides this, nature thickens his skin; the hide of the southern horse sells higher than that of the northern horse, because it is thinner. Change the skin of a horse for that of a rhinoceros, will he race or hunt as well?

We do not attend enough to warmth.

Mr. Darwin does not seem to be aware that the horse changes his coat! or that there is any difference between his summer and winter coat! or that the new coat of the same individual comes thick directly he is exposed to cold. Fine winter coats should be got by clothing and warmth, not by singeing and cold. Starvation itself is not more terrible than cold. Nature comes to the rescue of the out-door horse, but frightful enormities result from singeing horses in the winter, and leaving

Warmth instead of singeing.

them to shiver in the stall inadequately clothed, to say nothing of the frightful figures which result.

Fear not your horse suffering from cold because he is stripped to work. Do not labourers strip to work? If a horse had a coat thick enough to keep him warm when at rest in winter, he could not hunt in this without being sweated to death any more than he could with four or five blankets on him.

No fear of cold from fine coats.

Fire and water are equally disastrous to the horse's skin. Allow neither singeing nor washing above the hoof, and even this only for *appearance*. For there is no more reason for washing the horse's foot when he is kept in a stable, than there is when he is kept in a paddock. But there are good reasons for keeping his foot full of dirt in the form of clay in the stable. Without it he fills his foot with the contents of the stall, which the shoe holds there. Now, which is worst for the foot, dirt or dung? Nothing can be more injurious to the frog than this.

Stop foot with clay.

But, alas! all is right, even with the master, provided

that there is not a speck on the *outside* insensible horn; and perhaps that is oiled and blacked (!) when the horse is brought out, while *inside*, the soft frog is left night and day soaked and saturated with the most frightful horrors. Hence the most fetid thrushes, and hence the contracted heel; for the contracted heel is the consequence, not the cause of the rotted frog.

The clay should not be mixed up with any of the horrors which grooms are so fond of. Besides defending the frog from the highly injurious juices of the stall this gives a *natural* support to the interior of the foot which the *artificial* shoe deprives it of.

The sore ridge.

Every joint of the backbone or spinal bone is surmounted by a *spine*. These are sharp and topped with gristle, and will not support weight, still less attrition. Hence the necessity of the wooden *tree* of a saddle, and even of a terret-pad to bridge the *ridge*. The old plan of fastening the horse's clothing, taken from the Persians, was by *rolling* a long strip loosely round and round him; hence our name of *roller* for the stable surcingle. This

avoided injury to the ridge: the objection is the trouble. The bridge or *channel* of our roller is *never* effective, and *every* stabled horse has a *sore ridge*. This is a great calamity to him as well as to his master.

The play of the ribs in breathing saws the sore; he is disinclined to lie down because the roller is tightened by this position. The groom puts his hand towards the ridge; the ears go back and a leg is lifted. The horse gets a kick in the stomach or a blow with the fist, and becomes shy in the stall as well as vicious. In cleaning him underneath, the groom rests his hand on the sore ridge and the horse dashes his teeth against the wall, and lashes out from pain; he becomes shy to saddle, shy to girth, shy to mount, and he hogs his back, and perhaps plunges when you are up.

I have used two remedies; first, a more efficient bridge. Let the pads of the channel be deep and *steep* towards each other and die off on the side from each other, set them wide apart and have the channel clear. The common error is to stuff the channel, which increases the

Stable breast-plate.

evil. Next a loose roller, but this involves the necessity of a breast-girth to prevent the roller going back under the flank. If the breast-girth is loose it falls below the breast and is burst by the legs of the horse in getting up. If it is tight it pulls the roller on to the rise of the withers. I have used, and I recommend a breastplate on the principle of a hunting breastplate. The bearing should be only from the top of the neck to the lower part of the roller; a long upper strap to prevent it falling forward when the head is down, should take off and on the channel by a slip loop. The lower strap is also taken off and on the roller with a slip loop. The breast-piece buckles or ties on the near shoulder. When taken off, it pulls out of the lower strap, and remains attached to the channel by the upper strap; the lower strap remains attached to the lower part of the roller.

I wish my pupil would make a model with my favourite bit of string, and then call the saddler to his aid. He may have it of scarlet, if he is fond of

ornament, of webbing bis Afro murice tincta, or of scarlet and gold if he likes.

The roller must keep the cloths forward; if they are fastened tight across the chest, the horse bursts them in getting up or in putting his head down.

The head-stall should have a buckle on each cheek-strap; the throat-lash should be sewed to the top, and should have a buckle on each side. If the horse slips his head-stall, take the throat-lash out of the front, and you may buckle it almost as tight as a neck-strap, which is the safest of all fastenings. The objection is that, when a horse has to raise heavy logs in the stall for each mouthful of hay, the strap wears his mane. For this reason a front is used to the head-stall; it however then wears the horse's head, and is the origin of what is called pole-evil; the bone of the nose is often worn through by the nose-band, forming abscesses *inside* the nostrils. Small horses and ponies are particularly liable to this, in getting their hay from high racks. These are reasons

The head-stall.

for horses standing loose where this is possible. A quarter of a century ago I had the honour to arrange the head-stalls of the 2nd Life Guards as above, and I am proud to see them still in use.

Never physic, blister, or fire.

On no occasion and on no persuasion give your horse physic, or bleed him, or blister him, or fire him, or let the blacksmith have anything to do with any part of him which is more sensible than the callous crust of his hoof.

Food for condition. Rest for strains. Nature for wounds.

Condition depends on food, not physic. Rest is the cure for sprains and strains. Nature cures wounds unless prevented by *art*. Nature stops the bleeding by the glue of the blood coagulating about the wound; *staunching* with cloths wipes this off and promotes the bleeding. Lint assists, but when Nature has formed a plaister over a wound it should not be interfered with or *washed;* leave it to come off of itself. Where great discharge ensues wash it off *sound* parts, and grease them to prevent the skin coming off. Don't believe in what is called "*proud flesh*." The granulations

of new flesh are always called so, and burnt off as fast as they grow by corrosive sublimate or "oils as 'll cut a broomstick in two."

Miles for shoeing.

As a brother officer of the 2nd Life Guards has published a perfect book on shoeing, and as he did me the honour to dedicate it to me, I have only to say that on that subject I am completely "Miles's boy."

Water always by the horse.

About a quarter of a century ago I recommended in print that all horses should have water by them in the stall: it is now so universally the practice, that I need not here repeat the reasons for it. I have not heard of any horse drinking till he burst, though all grooms assured me that all stabled horses would do so.

It is distending food, not drink, which forms the large carcase. Food takes long to digest, but it is astonishing how quickly what the horse drinks is absorbed. The late Mr. Field having a horse condemned to die, kept him two days without water, gave him two buckets, and killed him five minutes after. There was not a drop of water in his stomach.

The horse should stand loose.

A horse should have a loose standing if possible; if he must be tied in a stall it should be flat. A horse cannot stand up hill without muscular exertion, and the toe constantly up, and the heel constantly down, induces ruinous distress to the back sinews.

No galloping on hard ground.

Do not let your groom gallop your hunter on the hard ground in autumn; and my last word shall be a petition on this subject to master as well as man—to deprecate a piece of inhumanity practised, indeed, as much by ladies as by gentlemen—the riding the horse fast on hard ground. I pray them to consider that horses do not die of old age, but that they are killed because they become crippled, and that he who cripples them is guilty of their death, not he who pulls the trigger. The practice is as unhorsemanlike as it is inhuman. It is true that money will replace the poor slaves as you use them up, and if occasion requires it they must, alas! be used up. But in my opinion, nothing but a case of life and death can justify the deed. If the ground is hard and even, a collected

He who cripples the horse kills him.

canter may be allowed; but if hard and uneven, a moderate trot at most. One hour's gallop on such ground would do the soundest horse irremediable mischief. Those who boast of having gone such a distance in such a time, on the ground supposed, show ignorance or inhumanity. Such feats require cruelty only, not courage. Nay, they are performed most commonly by the very horsemen who are too cowardly or too unskilful to dare to trust their horse with his foot on the elastic turf, or to stand with him the chances of the hunting-field. And such is the inconsistency of human nature, that they are performed by persons who would shudder at the sight of the bleeding flank of the race-horse, or who would lay down with disgust, and some expression of maudlin, morbid humanity, the truly interesting narrative of that most intrepid and enduring of all gallopers, Sir Francis Head. But compare the cases. In the case of the race-horse, his skin is wounded to urge him to his utmost exertion for a few seconds, from which in a few minutes he is perfectly recovered, and ready, nay eager,

to start again. In the case of the wild horse of the Pampas, he is urged for two, three, or perhaps five hours, to the utmost distress for wind, as well as muscular fatigue. He is enlarged, and in a day or two he is precisely the same as if he had never been ridden. But in the case of the English road-rider, though no spur is used, unfair advantage is taken of the horse's impetuous freedom of nature, his sinews are strained, his joints permanently stiffened, he is deprived at once and for ever of his elasticity and action, and brought prematurely a cripple to the grave.

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